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Editorial Foreword

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We are pleased to be publishing this issue of IJASS as COVID-19 vaccination programmes gather momentum across the world. The pandemic has brought home how abruptly our predictable futures can be destabilised. We have all had to readjust our day to day living expectations and responses to cope with the peril of serious life threatening illness. Becoming more vulnerable has, hopefully, increased our awareness of the importance of caring collectivism and mutualism in enabling us to navigate uncertain futures.

The five articles in this issue highlight the significance and value of collective care across the lives of children, adults, hard-pressed communities and young people. Care is manifested in different forms and practices. It represents a species activity that we engage in to protect and repair ourselves, our society and our ecological relationship with nature. Protection and safeguarding for school-going children, at risk adults and fostering are delegated activities framed by policy and practice which must be grounded in the ethics of care. Self-help and mutual self-care are important for recovering positive mental health and for realising the benefits of community arts for positive social changes.

In the first paper by Barry Morrissey *A Critical Policy Analysis of Ireland's Child Protection Procedures for Schools: Emerging Policy Considerations*, Ireland's child protection procedures for schools are explored and the influence of case law and regulatory theory is examined. Difficulties relating to differentiating the curricular component to child protection for learners with special educational needs is considered. Possible implications of this policy review for pedagogy and practice are specified.

In *Safeguarding Adults at Risk: Critical Commentary on the Construction of the Adult at Risk in Ireland*, Susan Flynn presents theoretically informed critical commentary, based on an over-view of key literature, concerning the notion of the adult at risk in contemporary Ireland. Context is established through discussion of the history of adult safeguarding in Ireland and development of public and policy awareness of the *adult at risk*.

Exploring Trauma-informed Foster Care as a Framework to Support Collaborative Social Worker - Foster Carer Relationships is the focus of Maria Lotty's paper. She suggests that a new framework, *Trauma-informed Foster Care*, developed to reflect the experience of the Irish foster care system, may be helpful in supporting more collaborative practices between foster carers and social workers in an Irish context. Considerations in the implementation of this framework are explored in the paper.

Calvin Swords and Stan Houston discuss the significance of social constructionism and allied meta-theoretical constructs in exploring personal recovery in mental health practice and service delivery in their paper *Using Social Constructionism to Research the Recovery Movement in Mental Health in Ireland: A Critical Reflection on Meta-theory Shaping the Inquiry*. Based on a comprehensive literature review and researcher reflexivity, they assert that adopting this theoretical position can result in new perspectives and learning for researchers and care professionals seeking to understand the existential meaning of personal recovery.

In *Cohesive Magic, Creative Collective Expression: Community Arts in Ireland and Their Beneficial Role in Youth Work and Community Development* Clay Darcy argues that community arts can play an important role in youth work and community development because this type of arts-based practice facilitates collective community expression and can help stimulate social change from the ground up. The paper encourages youth work, community development and social studies students and practitioners to explore opportunities to foster cohesive magic and creative collective expression to bring about social change.

In these difficult times, the authors of all five articles provide cogent arguments for re-organising and re-framing the provisioning and delivery of care at individual and social levels. We welcome this new thinking to reset the care agenda and trust that you will find the articles to be interesting and informative

On a final and very important note, we extend a very sincere thank you to each of our external paper reviewers for the sharing of their expertise and their invaluable contribution to this edition.